



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 8 October 2015

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

Conference on “Minority rights in divided societies”

Sarajevo, 15 October 2015

Venue: Hotel Marriot Courtyard, Skenderija 1, Sarajevo

PROGRAMME

Persons belonging to national minorities in the Western Balkans face a number of important challenges when it comes to the enjoyment of their rights today. While societies in the region experience overall more peaceful relations than in the past, divisions are still present and noticeable in everyday life. The promotion of integrated and cohesive societies where diversity is respected and encouraged therefore remains a crucial objective in a process in which international instruments such as the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities play an important role.

The purpose of this conference is to address the remaining sources of division and discuss concrete proposals to overcome them. Participants are invited to actively contribute to discussions on practical and theoretical issues surrounding the role of states, international organisations, civil society actors, persons belonging to national minorities and others in promoting the protection of minority rights in diverse and integrated societies.

9:00 – 9:30 Registration

9:30 – 9:45 Opening

Semiha Borovac, Minister for Human Rights and Refugees, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Mary-Ann Hennessy, Head of Council of Europe Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina

9:45 – 10:00 Key-note address

Francesco Palermo, President of the Advisory Committee

Implementation of the Framework Convention in divided societies

10:00 – 11:30 Panel I: Minority rights in divided societies: opportunities and challenges

Chair: Petra Roter, Vice President of the Advisory Committee

Panelists: María Ochoa-Llido, Head of Anti-Discrimination and Social Cohesion Department, Council of Europe

Council of Europe tools for the promotion of minority rights

Christine Hirst, Chief Communities Section, OSCE Mission in Kosovo

Communities' rights in a post-conflict context

Jan Snidauf, Head of Political and Economic Section, Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina

EU approaches for the protection of minorities and social inclusion

Claude Cahn, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

The United Nations, minority rights in divided societies

Discussion

11:30 – 11:45 Coffee

11:45 – 13:15 Panel II: Promoting the enjoyment of minority rights in the Western Balkans

Chair: Adam Fagan, Professor of European Politics, Queen Mary University of London

Panelists: Jens Woelk, Associate Professor, School of International Studies, University of Trento

Models of statehood and their consequence for the promotion of minority rights

Denisa Sarajlić Maglič, President of the Board – Foreign Policy Initiative BH

The role of the international community in minority rights protection in the Western Balkans

Aleš Balut, Senior Political Advisor, Office of the High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Access to rights of returnees

Jakob Finci, President of the Jewish Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Fighting discrimination through legal means: a personal story

Discussion

13:15 – 14:30 Buffet lunch

14:30 – 16:00 Panel III: From division to inclusion through minority rights

Chair: Ivana Jelić, Second Vice President of the Advisory Committee

Panelists: Neven Anđelić, Member of the Advisory Committee in respect of Bosnia and Herzegovina

When the majority becomes a minority

Dervo Sejdić, Vice President of NGO Kali Sara Roma Information Centre
Roma inclusion in the Western Balkans

Brigitta Busch, Member of the Advisory Committee in respect of Austria
Language as a factor of inclusion or exclusion

Steinar Bryn, Senior Advisor, Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue, Norway
Reconciliation and the promotion of inter-cultural dialogue

General discussion

16:00 – 16:15 Final remarks and conclusion

Semiha Borovac, Minister for Human Rights and Refugees

Francesco Palermo, President of the Advisory Committee

Reception